1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Ancient Georgia] 000

Here too we can perceive an essential element of the old system, according to which the eldest member of the *gvari* administered the *sagwareulo*, succession passing from the eldest to the eldest of *gvari*, i.e. to the brother or uncle, and not from father to son. 611

In Strabo's time then the highest power belonged to one *sagwareulo*, the eldest member of which, or, using the old term, the *mamasakhlisi* of which, was King of the whole of Iberia. 622

In the actual administration of justice and of military affairs the King was assisted by the second eldest member of his *gvari*, who after the King held the first place in the country. In time of peace he administered justice, while in time of war he led the King's army.

Next to the *samepo* or royal *gvari* the place of honour was held by the *samghudelo gvari* or "priestly clan," which besides administering religious affairs provided also the executive elements in the primitive state. [793]

No person except a member of the royal *gvari* had the right to possess bondsmen. The numbers of the royal *gvari* as well as of the priestly *gvari* were small. The number of *gvarni* in bondage was also limited. The *gvarni* in bondage were the property of the royal *gvari* in whose *sagwareulo* they lived and to whom they paid their dues in service and in kind. 567 ●

The rest of the population was entirely free and consisted of free *gvarni* which in time of peace followed an agricultural life and in time of war armed themselves and fought the enemy. This free population was divided into *gvarni* or *sakhlni*, who lived each on their respective *sagwareulo*. Private 565 423 621

l: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 RI1 Georgia RI1

[Medieval Georgia]

CHAPTER XXII

THE INSTITUTION OF PATRONQMOBA

566 THE term "feudalism" is rendered in Georgian by *patron-*
●567 *qmoba*, which is a compound word consisting of *patroni* and
631 *qmoba*. *Qmoba* is the abstract form of *qma*, the serf or slave,
423 and means serfdom or slavery. The word *patroni* is the Georgian variant of the Roman *patronus* and is first met with in Georgian documents dating from the eleventh century.

571 As the etymological meaning of the word indicates *patron-qmoba* denoted an organization or society based on the relationship between master and slave. The word *patroni* had several meanings. It denoted:—

1. A private owner or possessor, as for instance *tsikhis patroni*—owner of a fortress: *midsis patroni*—owner of land.
2. A tutor, protector or guardian: *Matiane Kartlisai*, for instance, relating the way in which Giorgi, the minor heir-apparent of Bagrat IV, was brought up, says, "They chose the sister of Bagrati as his *patroni* or tutoress".[1]

[643] 3. A king or sovereign: the historian of King David Aghmashenebeli, speaking of the service rendered to the King by Giorgi Dchqondideli, the *Mdsignobart-Ukhutsesi*, says that "he was from boyhood in the service of the *patroni*", i.e. of the King.[2] The Historian of Queen Tamara (1184–1212) uses *patroni* particularly frequently in the sense of "king" or "queen".[3]

Patroni thus denoted not only an owner, protector and guardian, but also even the supreme ruler of the country, the King himself. The *didebulni* officials and the powerful *gvarishvilni* ("sons of *gvarni*") were also, like the kings, called *patroni*.

631 Just as *patroni* denoted owner, protector, guardian, lord
566 and king, so the term *qma* also in its turn was used to denote
423 "a subject", even though he were a *didebuli aznauri* or a *dide-*
571 *buli* official. The Historian of Queen Tamara speaks, for instance, of the Queen's *didebulni*, namely of Zakharia Panaskerteli and Daniel Kalmakheli as "the good *qmani*, the favoured of the *patroni*", that is as of good subjects of the sovereign. The Historian of Queen Tamara calls the Shirvanshah, whose

[1] *Matiane Kartlisai*, p. 226. [2] *Tzkhovrebai Mepet-Mepisa Davitisa*, p. 301.
[3] *Istoriani da Azmani*, p. 418.

1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Medieval Georgia]

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SLAVE TRADE: DECLINE OF THE POPULATION

567 It has already been stated that, as under the mediæval feudal laws of Europe, a peasant in Georgia could be transferred with an estate, given away by his master, sold, or could sell himself into slavery. He could also purchase his freedom, or he might be given his freedom, either in perpetuity or for the life of his master. There are frequent records for the seventeenth century, of the sale of peasants and their families. Thus a document of 1689 records the sale of eight peasants "for a handful of gold"; according to another document, the *tavadi* Amilakhori takes a peasant in settlement of a debt of ten *tumani*[1]; a certain Bejan manumits his *glekhi* Papia in consideration of four head of cattle, a well-harnessed horse and a copper pot.[2] From the end of the fifteenth century, when intercourse with the Persians and Turks became very close, the seignioral right to sell serfs—which had its parallel under most feudal systems—was abused and abased by the wholesale exportation of serfs of both sexes to the slave-markets of Tabriz, Akhaltzikhé, Trebizond and Constantinople. The iniquitous commerce was particularly brisk in Mingrelia, Guria and Imereti. During the seventeenth century we find King Taymuraz I of Kakheti accusing the Dadiani of selling ten to fifteen thousand Christian boys every year to the Turks, and the Gurieli of disposing of at least twelve thousand. The practice of selling the young people into slavery was not always confined to the serfs, and Papuna Orbeliani records that in 1747, one hundred sons of *tavadni* and *aznaurni* were sent to Persia on the demand of Shah Ibrahim, while in 1741 Nadir Shah, who was then fighting in Daghestan, demanded delivery to him of three hundred young widows, an equal number of boys and girls, five hundred peasants' families, and twenty thousand measures of wheat.[3]

[1] Then equivalent to about £10 sterling.
[2] For full references, see Brosset, *Introduction*, p. lxxii.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. cii.

1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Medieval Georgia]

THE SLAVE TRADE

567 Sir John Chardin, who was in Mingrelia and Georgia during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, wrote that:

> "Mingrelia is at present very much dispeopl'd; there not being in it above twenty thousand inhabitants. Though it is not above thirty years ago there was no less than fourscore thousand. The cause of which decrease proceeds from their Wars with their neighbours and the vast number of people of both sexes, which the Nobility have sold of late years. For a long time there has been drain'd out of Mingrelia every year, either by Purchase or Barter, above twelve thousand persons; all of which are sold to the Mahometans, Persians and Turks, there being none but they that deal in that sort of Traffic in those parts. They carry three thousand every year directly to Constantinople, which they have in Exchange for Cloth, Arms and other things which they carry, as I have said, into Mingrelia." [1]

Chardin adds that "I have been shew'd several Gentlemen who have been so prodigiously unnatural" as to sell their own children, wives and mothers. And he proceeds to give an account of an impecunious but enterprising nobleman, who, in order to find the wherewithal to marry his mistress, had recently sold his own wife and twelve kidnapped priests to a Turkish sea captain.

The Caucasian slave-trade was, of course, no new phenomenon,[2] although during the period of Turkish and Persian intervention in the country from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, the exportation of human flesh attained unprecedented dimensions.

The trade in human flesh was even more rife among the mountaineers—Abkhaz and Cherkess—than it was among the Georgians; and for a period as late as that of the Crimean War, the archives of the British Consulate at Trebizond contain interesting references to the illicit commerce in slaves carried on by Turkish vessels trading from Trebizond along the Circassian coast—which at that date was under more or less effective Russian control.

Repulsive and abhorrent as the trade is to the modern mind, it must be remembered that the evil has—as have so many of the evils of the world—a way of righting itself. The mass deportation of slaves amounted in fact to a popular

[1] Chardin (1686 ed.), pp. 90–1.

[2] From the earliest historic times Caucasian slaves were celebrated. Ezekiel records that Tubal and Meshech "traded the persons of men" in the cities of Syria, and Herodotus notes the tribute of boys and girls sent by the Colchians to the Persians. In the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era, the Byzantines resorted to the Abkhazians for their most fashionable breed of eunuch. Procopius, VIII, iii, 16–21, "*for each one of them* (the Abasgi) *had to dread that at some time he would become the father of a eunuch child.*"

l: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Medieval Georgia]

567 emigration from countries which, although rich enough to support a thriving population, were so disorganized by existing political conditions that life had become in fact intolerable for the lower social elements. The miserable Georgian boy dragged away from the sordid poverty of his father's feudal holding, found his way, through the Turkish slave-market, into the Janissary corps—where at least the life of a soldier, and not of a slave, awaited him. The highest posts in the Turkish and Persian Empires were filled many times by the unfortunate deportees, and the Mamluk corps, for so long the masters of Egypt, was recruited from the Black Sea slavers. Again, wretched girls from the mountains, whose future at home would have been to have been sold by a peasant father to a peasant husband for the price of a few sheep, was passed on from the slave-ships to the comparative comfort, and sometimes to the luxury of Muslim harims, where they would find, more often than not, a husband more kindly and more desirable than their own bucolic kinsfolk.

The effect on the ethnography of the Middle East of this forcible and widespread emigration from the Caucasus, which came to a head in the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, is an interesting question which has not attracted the attention it
161 deserves. The population of the Caucasus in the time of Queen Tamara must have been very great indeed, and the inhabitants per square mile would appear to have been more numerous than in England and Scotland at the same period. England and Scotland were then backward countries in North-Western Europe,[1] whereas the Caucasus was one of the most prosperous regions of the Middle East. The evidence of ruins of castles and monasteries all over Georgia and Armenia tell their story of a numerous and prosperous population, much greater in numbers than during recent generations. The towns of the Mussulman provinces in the eastern Caucasus —Barda'a, Baylakan, Derbend and Shamakha, Ganja and Dabil—were famous throughout the Mussulman countries, which were then the richest regions of the world.

The Mongol census of 1259—after forty years of war—gives figures which are credible for that period, and which can only indicate those of the prosperous days of the Georgian Kingdom and of the Mussulman emirates. The census carried out by the No'in Arghun—an experienced administrator who had as object the levying of troops and the adjust-

[1] The passing power of Henry II and of the Angevin dynasty rested mainly on the spreading continental possessions of that house.

l: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 R11 Georgia R11

[Medieval Georgia]

000 now very handsome and very well shap'd, tho' they are still inferior to the Georgians." [1]

And so the wheels of suffering turn. The pious Chardin in his century had not the gift "to see oursels as others see us". The Caucasian trade in kind's flesh was certainly more disgusting than the English and Spanish trade in negroes, which was flourishing during and long after this period, and it was more barbarous than the slave-holding in America which outlived the Turkish Black Sea slaving of the Crimean War days. But while *The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia* were going to press, his fellows in France and England were being herded in chains to the West Indian plantations where not even a Janissary's career awaited them. And indeed it may be doubted whether the physical and spiritual miseries of the cargoes of the Turkish ships (where at least their owners, as we read from other works, were accustomed to keep them in good trim with a view to high prices on the domestic market) were worse than the sufferings endured during the last century by the convict transports to the Antipodes or in the abominably squalid emigrant ships which took the victims of the Irish famine across the Atlantic.

● 567 The better sort of men in Georgia, even during the flourishing days of the slave-trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, do not seem to have regarded the evil without serious heart-searching. We have already quoted Taymurazi's denunciation of the Dadiani and the Gurieli. The practice of selling slaves was strongly condemned by the heads of the Church, and severe penalties were threatened —more often than imposed—for the sale of Christian souls to the Muslim. The Laws of the Catholicos, which are included in the *Codex Vakhtangi*, pronounce excommunication on those who sell slaves to the Muslim, and impose hanging as a penalty in the case of failure to repurchase a victim. The canons of the ecclesiastical assemblies ring with denunciations of the practice. In effect, however, the intervention of the Church appears to have taken milder form. There is extant a charter of the seventeenth century in which a Prince Palavandishvili undertakes to the Catholicos Nikolaoz Amilakhori not to sell

[1] *Chardin* (Argonaut ed.), pp. 183–4; cf. also *Don Juan of Persia*, who states that Shah Abbas on his accession, "took into his service to form his bodyguard 12,000 Georgian renegades". (*Don Juan of Persia: a Shiah Catholic* (1560–1604), translated and edited by G. Le Strange, London, 1928, p. 209); and Krusinski, who mentions "several great towns inhabited by Georgians of the King's Guard . . . Schah-Abas after having drawn their ancestors from Georgia, plac'd them in this canton, which they began to inhabit one hundred and thirty years before" (*History of the Revolution of Persia*, II, 124, ed. 1728).

1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 RI1 Georgia RI1

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any more slaves, and by another, two noble brothers promise 567
the Catholicos Domenti II to repurchase slaves which they had sold at Akhaltzikhé, and also not to divide up families.[1]

Furthermore the practice existed, on the occasion of levies 651
of slaves by Turkish and Persian armies, of buying substitutes 567
from among the mountaineers—Ossetians and Cherkess—in order to avoid surrendering Georgians into slavery. King Wakhtang VI of Kartli is commended for only sending slaves to the Shah when they were actually demanded, and then for buying substitutes instead of sending Georgians.[2] Wakhushti states that, in the reign of King Simon I of Kartli, a special tax of one *marchil* (about two shillings) was levied on each peasant's house in order "to buy Ossetians, Caucasians and Cherkess, which he sent to the Qaen".[3]

Again there was a special obligation laid on the Tatar nomads of Borchalo to provide for the slaves on their way to the Persian border.

Ground down by an inequitable and tyrannous fiscal 565
system, oppressed by onerous feudal obligations, harassed by the perpetual civil warrings of their masters, harried by continual Mussulman incursions, duped and mulcted by an ignorant and unworthy priesthood, and living under the constant threat of deportation and the break-up of their families, the lot of the Georgian peasants was a miserable one. Nature alone was their friend: their physical needs in a mild and equable climate were insignificant; a rich soil, a warm sun and an adequacy of water could rapidly make good to them their losses and their deprivations; a primitive and all-surrounding forest and mountains difficult of access, which they could know better than their masters and their enemies, offered them a near and friendly refuge in their dangers and their troubles. The Georgian peasantry certainly had more to suffer than any other peasantry during the three centuries following the Division of the Kingdom—whatever may have been their relative situation during earlier periods of history. For neither the Armenians nor the peasantry of the Balkan lands nor of Persia and Turkey—great as were their tribulations—had to endure the existence of a perpetual state of war, and the continuous and virulent driving 565
of the slave-traffic. It is the character of the Georgians— 181
the "æsthetic irresponsibility" of them—that has carried them through their miseries; and it is, perhaps, these miseries,

[1] Brosset, *Introduction*, p. lxxiii.
[2] *Idem.*, *Introduction*, p. clxi.
[3] Brosset, *H. de la G.*, I, 105.

1: Allen H-4 (no date) 1932 RI1 Georgia RI1

439 by-word throughout Iran and Iraq; it had become, moreover, a place of Muslim pilgrimage.[1]

We have already referred to the export trade in iron and in nuts which formed two of the staple items of Georgian production. The export of wines to Persia and the Armenian towns was also very great, and the vintages of Kakheti were greatly appreciated by the easy-going Shi'ahs of Isfahan.[2] Evliya, who visited Tiflis not long after the destruction of the Kakhetian mulberry-orchards by Shah Abbas, states that there was no silk produced in Georgia. Chardin, however, says that great quantities of raw silk were exported to Erzerum for the Turkish market,[3] and it may be assumed that the production was thus diverted because the Georgians could not compete in the more accessible Persian market against the celebrated centres of silk production in Shirvan and Aran. Considerable quantities of linen clothes were also exported annually to Turkey, and 60,000 ells of linen represented the tribute paid over by the Dadiani of Mingrelia to the Pasha of Akhaltzikhé.[4] Georgian falcons and other birds of prey, celebrated in the East throughout the centuries, were exported into Persia.[5] Georgian horses were also in much demand.

• 567 The slave trade was, as we have elsewhere considered, the principal object of commerce into Georgia and the mountain districts during these times, and a great part of the maritime traffic on the Black Sea relied primarily on this trade—their outward cargoes being products to trade against flesh and their homeward cargoes slaves. Chardin says that he had heard several old Turkish captains affirm that there were all together about fifteen hundred vessels trading in the Black Sea in that time, of which about a hundred were lost by shipwreck every year.[6]

439 In Chardin's ship there were about two hundred people; the Commandant of Azac (Azov) and a suite of 20, 100 Janissaries, 50 passengers and a crew of 30. Chardin's ship arrived at Caffa, having made the journey from Stambul in eight days. From Caffa the ship proceeded to trade down the coast along towards Georgia.

"Our Ships Lading consisted in Salt Fish, Caveare, Oyl, Biscuit, Wooll, Iron, Tin, Copper, Copper and Earthen Ware, in all sorts of Harness, Arms, Utensils of Husbandry, Cloth, Linnen of all Colours, Habits for Men and Women, Coverlets, Carpets, Leather, Boots and

[1] Evliya, I, 172. [2] Chardin, p. 189. [3] *Idem.*, p. 190. [4] *Idem.*, p. 107.
[5] *Idem.*, p. 92.
[6] *Idem.*, p. 66; Evliya, II, 67–70, gives a dramatic account of a shipwreck in the Black Sea, when nearly all the ship's company, 500 souls, were lost.

5: Allen H-4 (no date) 1923 RH1 Caucasia
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of the army. The monas were the slaves without property who performed unskilled labour, working in the fields, vineyards and forests of their lords, repairing the roads, and constructing buildings. Further, they were under obligation to supply guides and escorts to their lords on a journey and in time of war to follow his banner. In return they occupied a plot of land, proper to themselves—a proportion of the produce of which they were compelled to pay to their masters,—and they could rely on the protection of the seignorial castle in the event of invasion. The lords administered local justice and had power of life and death; further, they were at liberty to sell or exchange their serfs, while the latter, if the land were sold, passed with it.

After the end of the fifteenth century, when intercourse with Persia and Turkey became easy, this seignorial privilege, which had its parallel in every country in Europe, was abased by the wholesale exportation of serfs, male and female, to the slave-markets of Tabriz, Akhaltsikh and Trebizond. This iniquitous commerce was particularly brisk in Mingrelia and Guria, and Chardin, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, estimated that the peasantry were sold into Turkey at the rate of 12,000 a year. "La Mingrélie," he states, "est aujourd'hui fort peu peuplée . . . la cause de cette diminution vient de ses guerres avec ses voisins, et de la quantité de gens de tout sexe que les gentilshommes ont vendue ces dernières années." He goes on to tell of an impecunious but enterprising nobleman who had recently sold twelve priests and his own wife to a Turkish sea-captain at Trebizond.

It must be explained, however, that this sale of Christian souls to the Infidels was strongly condemned by the heads of the Georgian Church, who imposed severe penalties when it was within their power, and remitted the sins of the penitent who should redeem a Christian from slavery in Turkey.

In addition to the feudal dues from the Royal estates, the Kings levied a number of general taxes, and of special dues on certain neighbourhoods, some of which must have seriously interfered with the prosperity of their subjects. Such were taxes on wine, flocks, beasts of burden, ploughs, married men, furnaces and falcons. But in addition to the impositions of their own kings and feudal lords, the long-suffering Georgian peasantry were subject to the indiscriminate levies of invading armies of Mongols, Persians and Turks. In 1724 the Turks imposed a poll-tax on the whole male population and levied on cattle, horses and agricultural products; in 1736 the Per-

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

583 171 the valuation and nature of payment of the bride-price as practiced by some of these peoples.[1] In examining the data we see that among the peoples with developed and stratified social organization the bride-price also varies, usually according to the social standing of the bride and according to such personal qualities as beauty, age, and whether she is a widow or single woman.

The amount of *kalim* paid for the bride was evaluated lately in Russian rubles: The Circassians adopted this medium of evaluation after the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, as may be seen from the fact that payment was made in rubles. However, prior to the time of Russian domination, there was no monetary system and all transactions, including the payment of the bride-price, were made in nature. The standard of value varied among the different peoples of the Caucasus. It represented the most valued objects of the country in question, but payment was usually made with common objects.[2] Thus, among the Circassians the payment to be made was valued in arms and was paid out *de facto* with slaves. 583 567 171 Here, for example, is the table of *kalim* paid for a Circassian princess valued in arms and paid for with women slaves, in number from six to fifteen:

(1) The best coat of mail valued at two women slaves.

(2) Another coat of mail valued at one woman slave.

(3) Arm mails—one woman slave.

(4) Arm mails and helmet—one woman slave.

(5) Sword—one woman slave.

(6) Sword (ordinary, simpler than the previous one)—one woman slave.

(7) Five horses—five women slaves. The value of each horse was equivalent to a woman slave.

Thus the *kalim* for a Circassian princess consisted of from six to fifteen women slaves, and sometimes even more. For the daughter of a nobleman (*uzden*), the *kalim* was from 800 to 1,200 rubles, and for a peasant girl from 200 to 600 rubles. With the 583 171 passage of time and changes in living conditions, the amount of the bride-price (*kalim*) was changed, so that at the end of the

[1] Malinin: 21-61.

[2] See details in the section dealing with "weregild."

C. A. 608 way, though all the members of a clan claim a common descent from the same ancestor, this descent is largely fictitious.

C. G. 565 642 Clans naturally differed in size and wealth, and this led in many parts of the Caucasus to a differentiation of classes and to a feudal structure of the society (Kabarda; lower regions of Dagestan). In Transcaucasia there was a further development into feudal

C. G. 619 monarchies (Georgia, Armenia). The original tribal structure was best preserved among the Georgian highlanders, the Svan, some of the W. Circassian tribes, the Ossetes, the Chechen and Ingush, and the tribes in the higher parts of Dagestan. For instance, the Pshav tribe (dziri, lit. "root") is divided into eleven clans (temi); the members of each clan bear the same name, but in everyday life are known under a second family name (gvari) derived from the proper name of a grandfather or great-grandfather. If a family expanded,

C. G. 565 new surnames were adopted. Where a differentiation of classes took place, the general pattern was the following. The upper class consisted of the nobility, in its turn subdivided into various ranks in the regions with more pronounced feudal traits (Georgia, Kabarda). The lower class consisted of the peasants; here too, a further stratification existed, depending on differences in degree of economic

C. G. [567] and personal freedom. The lowest classes were the slaves; mostly prisoners of war. In

C. G. 565 Georgia the various grades of the clergy corresponded to the ranks of the nobility, the head of the church (Katholikos) being equal to the king. As to the functions of the different classes, Kabardian society may serve as an example. The function of the highest class, the princes, was to defend their subjects and to provide leadership in wars and predatory incursions into the territory of neighboring tribes (and in the nineteenth century, especially into that of the Russians); such raids were part of the everyday life of most N. Caucasian mountaineers. The representatives of the second class, the nobles, were always at the disposal of their prince, assisted him in his daily activities, accompanied him on his raids, and in general carried out his orders. They could also be called upon to provide the prince with cattle, corn, or other goods, and such a request could not be refused. When a prince died and left several sons, each of the nobles declared himself a subject of the one of his choice. Part of the production of the peasants belonged to the princes and nobles; the latter provided their subjects with draft animals, agricultural implements, and feed-corn. In case of discontentment the nobles and also the free peasants could leave the territory of their lords and settle elsewhere. The slaves had no rights and owned no property, they were employed in the cultivation of the soil or in the domestic service of the princes and nobles and could be sold at will.

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After the incorporation of the various parts of the Caucasus into the Russian empire, slavery and serfdom were gradually abolished (second half of the nineteenth century). Before the revolution, the Russian hold on the Caucasus depended to a large extent on the nobility (whose ranks, in Georgia as well as in the N. Caucasus, were put on a par with the Russian); after the revolution, of course, an appeal was made to the lower classes.